



What's with UUS

Newsletter of the Unitarian Universalists of Sterling
A Welcoming Congregation
Sterling, Virginia



Minister's Message



Snow-Covered Theology

Rev. Anya Sammler-Michael

The snowfall has already painted a thick white cover on every exposed surface. It has only been falling for a few hours, but even in the first few minutes it was apparent that the flakes had a determined, heavy presence. This is the snow I love: the sort that transforms everything it touches. The hardest of lines, and the most precise right angles, are softened. Building ledges seem to slope; signs and telephone poles are swathed in unpredictable bends. I look outside and see a world that looks calmer, slower, less ridged (until of course I get into my car to drive home!).

It is this kind of snow that reaches into the darkest and coldest of my mid-winter days to surprise me again, to let me know that there is a rhythm and a beauty to this universe, both natural and profound. I look at the blanket, indiscriminant in its coverage, and realize that there is so very much that we do not control.

Our yearn to understand springs from experiences like this and un-tallied others. Year after year, the snow falls, we lose family members and friends to death, we struggle with sadness, and we experience joy that surprises us with its brilliance. We can search to understand the physical and chemical components through science. But what can we do with the rest?

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President's Message



Religion 2.0

Bryan George

If you are reading this article, there is a very good chance that you've come across it by visiting our new

website. If so, welcome, and I hope you're enjoying the experience. If not, I encourage you to visit the site at <http://uusterling.org> and experience it firsthand.

Our webmaster group (myself included) recently put forth the effort to upgrade the UUS website, using an Open Source content management system called [Joomla!](#). This software package provides a high-quality, low-maintenance, standards-compliant website design out of the box, and costs exactly \$0.00 above the expense of a hosting service.

More importantly, Joomla! (and similar systems such as [Drupal](#) and [Plone](#) – and no, I'm not making these names up) provides a distributed website maintenance approach that allows members of the congregation to post and edit items on the website with nothing more than a standard Web browser. The name "Joomla!" is a phonetic adaptation of the Swahili word "Jumla," meaning "all together." Get it? For those not familiar with information technology, this notion of a collaborative, bottom-up approach to content development is one aspect of a concept referred to as "[Web 2.0](#)."

Distinguished from the World Wide Web (aka "Web 1.0"), which is a one-way approach to content controlled by

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Worship Calendar

February 3 – "What Are You Going To Do With Your One Wild and Precious Life?" Rev. Anya Sammler-Michael. The poem, "The Summer Day" by Mary Oliver, closes with this question. Eight individuals of all ages have been asked to respond. Come and find inspiration in their visions.

February 10 – "What Are We Doing Here Anyway?" – **Religion II** Rev. Anya Sammler-Michael shares the second of a sermon series on religion. This time we will ask "Why do we do what we do when we do religion?" and "How do Unitarian Universalists do religion?"

February 17 – **A Worship Associate Service, TBD**

February 24 – "Hair!" The UUS Rock Band and Rev. Anya Sammler-Michael will share the music of "Hair!" while they explore the meaning of freedom.



(Minister, Continued from page 1)

My response is theology—a process of passing my experience through my mind and heart, testing it with the ideas writ for years by mystics and rationalists, and working to pull some semblance of understanding from the jumble. Through this process, I have come to hold a few beliefs with constancy: I recognize a unity that runs through all that is—a force that all life engages. Ralph Waldo Emerson calls this force an Over Soul. Hindus refer to an overarching unity called Brahman. I prefer the simple term “unity,” though on occasion I may use “spirit of life” or “soul.”

But this intellectual engagement is only part of the journey. Like any worthy scientific theory, beliefs, too, must be tested. Scientific experiments occur primarily in laboratories or like spaces. Theological experiments occur in the life of a congregation, and, most decidedly for me, in worship.

It is in worship that I don't simply believe that a unity flows through all, but I feel that it must be so. There are the hymns, where all our unique voices join to raise a beautiful harmony. And there are the prayers and reflections when we move from word, to silence, to music, each with his or her own concerns and joys resting on our hearts, yet joined in the process, giving the experience a greater weight than if we were alone. And there is the pleasure of listening, both during the service and after, to the ways we each respond to the worship, hearing a beautiful individuality in the responses, and then looking around the room to see that we have gathered, again, together.

I hope that you will find a place in this congregation to “test” your beliefs. I hope you will enjoy experiences where the beauty and truth that you wish for come to life.

We each yearn to understand life in our own way. Some of us search with our minds; others with our hearts; others follow where our spirit leads. But like the snow that falls indiscriminately on every surface, our individual searches reach indiscriminately into this shared experience of life.

- Rev. Anya Sammler-Michael

(President, Continued from page 1)

those with the talent and specialized technology to produce content (think of television programming produced by major networks and pushed out to passive consumers), Web 2.0 is bidirectional and significantly more democratic. The intent of a Web 2.0 content development approach is to enable collective talent and wisdom, using inexpensive and easily accessible technologies to get as many people in on the act as possible (think of videos posted on YouTube).

So, beyond establishing my geek creds, why exactly am I going on about Web 2.0 in an article that should be expounding on the virtues of Unitarian Universalism? It's simple. I would argue that, in many ways, Unitarian Universalism is to the world of religion what Web 2.0 is to the world of information.

Of course, this is not the first time that the Web has been used as a metaphor for Unitarian Universalism's freedom-based approach to religion. After all, Sir Tim Berners-Lee, the (nominal) inventor of the World Wide Web, is a Unitarian Universalist, and has professed that the philosophy behind the Web is consistent with UU principles in his article “The World Wide Web and the ‘Web of Life’”:

“... the Web and the UU concept of faith are similar in that both serve as a place for thought, and the importance of the quest for truth, but without labelling any one true solution. The quest for the truth is always accompanied by skepticism of anyone claiming to have found it.”

The World Wide Web did indeed open the door to an era where messages could be efficiently published to global

audiences. But if the Web opened the door, Web 2.0 has blown that door off its hinges by empowering individuals not only to benefit from the efficiency of message delivery, but to have a hand in crafting the message itself.

In a similar way, traditional religious denominations (insofar as they attempt to embrace modernity), do so in an incremental fashion, and are certainly not willing to allow the radical notion of members of the congregation having a say in how to understand and appreciate the word of God (who is, you see, a dictator after all).

Unitarian Universalists will have none of that. We do not practice religious anarchy, of course – Web 2.0 wouldn't be possible without organized leadership, standards, and best practices, and neither would the Unitarian Universalist approach to religion. *But the voice of each and every person who embraces that approach is valued as much as that of anyone else.*

Where Web 2.0 distinguishes itself admirably in the information technology realm is by enabling the voices of individuals to be heard in the larger online community, and by enabling good ideas flowing into the community to take root and flourish as part of a thriving and evolving ecosystem of content.

Similarly, where Unitarian Universalism distinguishes itself admirably in the religious realm is by enabling the religious opinions of individuals to be heard in the larger congregation, and by enabling the good ideas that flow into the congregation to take root and flourish as part of a thriving and evolving ecosystem of religious thought.

I hope that, as you are inspired to partake of our great experiment in online democracy, you are also inspired to partake of our great experiment in religious democracy as well.

Yours in Faith,

Bryan



Ordination and Installation

Ordination Installation Committee

Ordination: The ceremony of consecration to the ministry.

Installation: The ceremony of installing a minister at a particular post.

On April 13, 2008, the Unitarian Universalists of Sterling will be called to ordain and install their minister, Anya Sammler-Michael. For ministers, ordinations happen only once in a lifetime. For congregations, ordinations and installations are a rare opportunity to participate in a beautiful and meaningful office of stewardship and celebration. There will be a number of ways for everyone to participate, but the most important of all is your presence. Please save the dates for:

A pre-celebration at UUS on Saturday, April 12, 2008, from 6:00 p.m. until 10:00 p.m.

The installation and ordination service will be held at Bull Run Unitarian Universalists on Sunday, April 13, 2008, from 4:00 p.m. until 8:00 p.m.

The Ordination / Installation Committee members are Celinda Chandler, Rosalie Clavez, and Gus Douoguih. They are supported by the Committee on Ministry members: Steve Dick, Elise Nicely, and Stephanie Roche.



Religious Exploration

Do not forget to thank the Religious Exploration (RE) volunteers each Sunday. Without them there would be no RE. The UUS RE program strives to provide a safe, supportive, and fun environment for children to develop a sense of self, a feeling of belonging, an appreciation for others, an ability to work together, and the skills and self-confidence necessary to take their values into the larger world. Sunday mornings provide opportunities for our children to join with others from like-minded families, and together to explore Unitarian Universalism, world religions, the world in which they live, and their own beliefs.

Our many volunteers make all this possible: Alyssa Lum led Kindergarten through third-grade class sessions and helped in the nursery for the first half of the year. She is taking a much-deserved break to care for her newborn daughter. Celinda Chandler and Sonya Connors continue to lead the Kindergarten through third-grade class in an introduction to the “super heroes” of the Hebrew and Christian Bibles and an exploration of the Unitarian Universalist values that are exemplified by these people’s lives. Celinda and Sonya are ably assisted by Joan Confoy, Nikki George, and Janice Thede. Kim Fitzgerald and Lori Rothman lead the fourth through seventh-grade class as they explore stories from the Hebrew and Christian Bibles. Susan Miller and David Scher advise the Youth Group, and Susan Rose is Youth Group parent. Michelle James and Alyssa Lum were the primary volunteers in the nursery for the first half of the year. With others volunteering in the nursery, they can now spend more time with their families and with the adults in the congregation.

If you would like to help one or two Sundays this year or have any questions about the RE program, contact Linda Weaver. And remember to thank the RE volunteers each Sunday!

- ☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆
- ☆☆ **Roving Reporter** ☆☆
- ☆☆ **By Susan Rose** ☆☆
- ☆☆ When filling out a form asking, ☆☆ “What are your hobbies?” I always ☆☆ say “walking, cooking, and ☆☆ reading mysteries.” What hobbies ☆☆ are tiding you through the winter? ☆☆
- ☆☆ **Elin (5) Walking!** ☆☆
- ☆☆ **Mattie (5) Walking, and cooking** ☆☆ with my Mom! ☆☆
- ☆☆ **James (7) Building model trains!** ☆☆
- ☆☆ **Grace (13) Singing (and** ☆☆ swimming in the summer!) ☆☆
- ☆☆ **Hanna (7) Walking and reading!** ☆☆
- ☆☆ **Molly (7) Dancing!** ☆☆
- ☆☆ **Joanna (9) Horses!** ☆☆
- ☆☆ **Libby (6) Dancing!** ☆☆
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RE News

- February 10 - Valentines for Vets -** The combined Kindergarten through seventh-grade class will talk about Valentine’s Day and make valentines for veterans.
- February 24 – Intergenerational service** incorporating music from *Hair!* Childcare will be available.

Youth Group Schedule

The UUS Youth Group will meet on February 10 and March 2, 9, and 30, 2008. The group will not meet on Intergenerational Service Sundays or on holiday weekends.

The Youth Group members are currently planning for the Youth Service on April 27, 2008, so mark your calendars!

Religious Exploration Schedule 2008

	Date	Lower Elementary Topic	Leader / Helper	Tween Topic	Leader	Nursery Adult
February	3	Joseph and His Brothers	Need Help-George	No class – Attend Service “One Wild & Precious Life”	No class	Need Help
	10	Social Action Sunday - Valentines for Vets	Weaver Chandler	Social Action Sunday - Valentines for Vets	Weaver Chandler	T. Thede
	17	Joseph and His Brothers Meet Again	Connors T. Thede	Philosophy	Rothman	M. Burns
	24	Hair! - Rock Service	No RE	Hair! - Rock Service	No RE	Need Help
March	2	Jesus & John the Baptist	Chandler Confoy	Mary & John the Baptist	Rothman	Need Help
	9	Social Action Sunday – Houses and Homes	Weaver George	Social Action Sunday – Houses and Homes	Weaver George	Confoy
	16	Esther (Purim)	Connors Bullock	Jesus	Fitzgerald	Roche
March	23	Equinox / Easter	No RE	Equinox / Easter	No RE	Need Help
	30	Social Action Sunday – Fair Trade	Weaver Thede	Social Action Sunday – Fair Trade	Weaver Thede	Need Help
April	6	Ministry of Compassion	Chandler Confoy	Paul	Rothman	Need Help
	13	Jesus Teaches by Telling Stories	Connors George	The Gospels	Fitzgerald	Need Help
	20	Taking Action 1	Weaver Thede	Taking Action 1	Weaver Thede	Need Help
	27	TBA	Weaver Confoy	No class – Attend Youth Service	No class	Need Help
May	4	Taking Action 2	Reeder Weaver Confoy	Taking Action 2	Reeder Weaver Confoy	M. Stafford
	11	Mothers Day / Flower Communion	No RE	Mothers Day / Flower Communion	No RE	Need Help
	18	Celebration Sunday	Chandler George	Review & Celebration	Rothman	Need Help
	25	RE Service Rehearsal	Weaver Thede	RE Service Rehearsal	Weaver Thede	Need Help
June	1	RE Service	No RE	RE Service	No RE	Need Help
	8	Trail Cleanup	Chandler Confoy	Trail Cleanup	Chandler Confoy	Need Help
	15	Games Day	Connors George	Games Day	Connors George	Need Help

Kut and UUS

UU Partner Church Program

Just imagine.... Every Sunday morning in simple wooden churches scattered throughout the foothills of the Himalayas, chalices are lit by Unitarians who share worship together for most of the day. There is a lot of singing...and a lot of preaching! These Unitarians live in northeast India, in an area called the **Khasi Hills**. There are approximately 10,000 Unitarians there; it is the third largest Unitarian community in the world.

The Khasi Hills is located in the Indian state of Meghalaya, which means "Abode of the Clouds." The area is quite isolated from the rest of India. The majority of residents migrated from east Asia several thousand years ago and established villages organized by matrilineal clan. Although the Khasi people are poor, living well below the global poverty level of \$1 a day, with resulting health, educational and environmental challenges, they exude a richness of spirit that seems lacking in many affluent societies.

Hang on ... is this a sociology class?

Well, maybe in a roundabout sort of way. We as UU's have a unique opportunity to learn about other cultures and deepen our faith and understanding, through direct relationship with our counterparts in other countries. This is made possible through the UU Partner Church Council (UUPCC), which was formed in 1993 to foster partner relationships between North American congregations and UU congregations and schools around the world. This includes countries with many years of active partnerships, such as Romania, Hungary, and the Czech Republic, as well as other countries where partnerships are beginning, such as the Philippines, India, and Poland. Congregations participate in partnerships as a means of moral and spiritual engagement with people who share our faith, but have very different lives than ours.

This past August, Dee Idnani, from the UU Congregation of Fairfax (UUCF), presented a Sunday service at UUS about Unitarian churches and villages in India. There is now a great opportunity

for partner churches in the Khasi Hills.

What is Unitarianism like in India?

The roots of Unitarianism in India have a familiar theme. It started as a grassroots breakaway movement in the 1880s. A student, Hajom Kissor Singh, began questioning the Calvinist dogma taught by Welsh and Scottish missionaries. He learned of Unitarianism and found that it integrated well with the traditional belief in the oneness of God. There are now 37 Unitarian churches and fellowships in Meghalaya. The anniversary of the founding of the Unitarian church is actually a state holiday!

The Unitarian Union of North East India (UUNEI) is the governing body of the Unitarian church in India. It establishes and runs local schools as its largest and most ambitious social justice program. For most villages, these are the only schools available. They are open and free to children of all religions.

These village schools are very basic. Many lack running water, electricity or even outhouses. The children sit on handmade wooden benches, with no desks, and use small individual chalk boards for writing. Books are rare. It gets quite cold during the winter months, and since there is no heat, the schools close from mid-December until mid-February.

What does Kut have to do with UUS?

Kut is a small Khasi village that has 29 Unitarians who are seeking a North American partner. They have a small church building and a tiny school with two teachers. After grade 3, the children of Kut walk to the neighboring village of Puriang, where they attend an upper primary school. It is a coincidence worth noting that Puriang is home to the partner church of UUCF, our neighbor in Oakton.

Over the years, there has been an expressed interest for UUS to be involved in the Partner Church program. However, the pursuit was always put on the back burner, waiting for that perfect time when we grew larger, got a settled minister, etc. Well...that perfect time has come knocking on our door!

Kut would be an ideal partnership opportunity for UUS for several reasons. First of all, we are a small congregation,

and Kut is a very small village. Most churches looking for partners are too large for a congregation of our size, but Kut is a perfect fit for UUS.

Secondly, Kut and Puriang are sister villages and work together on many projects. This means that UUS could work with the Fairfax church, which has many years of experience as a partner church and could provide valuable guidance. There would be many overlapping opportunities for exchange between the churches here and the churches in India.

Lastly, UUS already has a number of individuals who are deeply involved with the partner church program in Fairfax, and so the foundation of collaboration already exists.

So how do we proceed? A partner church group has recently been formed at UUS. The purpose is to explore and develop the idea of partnering with the Unitarian church in Kut. Anyone who is interested in this opportunity is encouraged to join the group. As part of the exploratory effort, Linda Reeder and her son will travel to the Khasi Hills in March with three members of UUCF. While there, they will be involved in a three-day community capacity building workshop. UUCF is sponsoring the workshop, which will include village-wide participation by residents of both Puriang and Kut. The community capacity building approach was developed by Dr. Dick Ford and has been used in over 35 countries with impressive results. The workshop is designed to build a consensus on what problems residents want to address and how they can best use local resources to help solve them. The outcome is a prioritized community action plan.

The decision to become a partner church is one of intentionality. There is a lot to be learned and considered. In the months to come, you can look forward to hearing much more about a possible UUS partnership with Kut.

Whom do I contact for more information? If you have questions or want to get involved, please contact any of the following individuals: Mike Berger, Rosalie Clavez, E.B. Kirkbride, Linda Reeder, Susan Rose, or Al Swett.

Adult Enrichment

Winter/Spring

Rev. Anya Sammler-Michael

Two new Adult Enrichment classes begin this winter.

Lay Ministers' Foundations

Do you want to lead worship or share a reading, but feel uncomfortable when you speak in public? Do you like to craft prayers or meditations, but wonder how they would be received? Do you want to facilitate an adult enrichment class, but wonder if your style is too academic for a 'church' environment? Do you want to act as a lay worship or facilitation leader, but wish to spend some time honing your skills and building your comfort? If so, please join us for Lay Ministers' Foundations.

The class will meet on three Saturdays from 10:00-2:00 (2/3, 3/15, 4/19). You are welcome to attend one, some or all three of the sessions. Please contact Rev. Anya at least a week before the class(es) to share briefly on what you want to accomplish with the experience.

Understanding the World's Religions

Led by Rev. Anya Sammler-Michael; some sessions co-lead by seminarian Scott Sammler-Michael.

This course introduces a multitude of religious traditions so that participants may deepen their understanding of the ideas and beliefs of the World's Religions, perhaps glimpsing "the transcending mystery and wonder affirmed in all cultures."

Participants will need to purchase one book: Huston Smith's World's Religions. The book is available used at Amazon.com for a very low price or new at the UUA bookstore (found at www.uua.org) or at local chain bookstores.

The class will be held on nine Wednesdays in February, March, and April (2/6, 2/13, 2/20, 2/27, 3/5, 3/12, 3/19, 3/26, 4/2).

The time will be 6:30-8:00 or 8:30. (We can move the start time to 7:00 if the class desires.)

Unitarian Universalists of Sterling Reimbursement Request

Name: _____ Date: _____

Amount of Reimbursement: \$ _____

Description of Reimbursement: _____

Form of Reimbursement (choose one):

- Pay person named above
 Donate my reimbursement to the church
 Pay vendor directly

Committee, Program or Person:

- Minister's Professional Expenses
 Minister's Discretionary Fund
 DRE Professional Expenses
 Worship Services
 Sunday Morning Committee
 RE Program
 Membership
 Music
 Finance Committee
 Web Site
 Communications Committee
 Newsletter
 Social Action
 Office Equipment and supplies
 Other

Items Covered:

- RE Supplies
 RE Curriculum
 RE Training
 RE Youth Activity
 RE Adult Ed
 Snacks/Food
 Copying/Printing
 Postage/stamps
 Pamphlets
 Name tags
 New member gifts
 Music
 Software
 Advertising
 Conferences/Meetings
 Other program supplies

Miscellaneous (Please Specify): _____

Signature _____

Committee Chair Approval _____

PLEASE ATTACH ALL RECEIPTS

(Also, if the expenditure does not match any specific category listed above, please check "miscellaneous" and include an explanation).

Revised December 13, 2007

Toilet Paper and Paper Towels!

Like magic, toilet paper, paper towels, and miscellaneous supplies appear at UUS on a regular basis. While it would be nice to think that they are gifts from Supply Claus and his tiny elves, they are really gifts and donations from thoughtful people who notice a need, fill it, and never ask for, or expect, reimbursement for the costs of their donations.

Even if you do not want to be reimbursed directly for your donation or gift, you may still file a reimbursement request. The reimbursement request form (see above) has been modified to allow you to donate your reimbursement to the church. When the UUS treasurers receive your form, they will record how much your items costs and will add the costs of your donation to your year-end donation statement for tax purposes.

By filing a reimbursement form and donating your reimbursement to the church, you help the Finance Committee obtain a more accurate picture of supply costs. You also increase your charitable tax deductions!

You may, of course, continue to request reimbursement for expenses you incur for the church. Copies of the form are available at UUS. If you have any questions, please contact Paul Roche or Alyssa Lum, UUS co-treasurers.

Small Group Ministry

I can't even believe it's 2008 and now it is one month in! Did your resolutions include participation in UUS Small Groups? These groups are the best way for members and friends to stay connected - to themselves and to others in our church community. Our small group ministry program is an important part of UUS, providing a way for members and friends to keep in touch and stay connected during the week; this contact can be just what you need, especially if you can't make every Sunday service.

More information on all small groups is available on our website (www.uusterling.org). Watch for announcements from these groups. UUS small groups are always open to new members.

New Groups

It is easy to start a small group. If you like to read and would like to discuss what you read with other UUS'ers, or if you like to watch and discuss movies, or if you like to quilt or do other fabric-related things, you could start a group. More information is available on our website under the drop-down menu Ministry/Small Groups, or contact Shelley Tamres (Board liaison to Small Groups) at shelleytam@aol.com.

Choir

The choir rehearses Monday evenings plus Sunday mornings when we sing, which is at least two Sundays a month. If you would like to join us, please see our music director, Dan Boothe, or any choir member.

Covenant Groups

Covenant Groups meet once a month during the school year to discuss a topic related to spiritual growth. Our most recent topic was "Faith and Doubt." We shared some personal stories of times when we experienced both and how we used those experiences. As a member of a group, you will be able to engage in these kinds of deeper conversations, and you will get to know the other members of your group in a way that might not otherwise be possible.

There are four groups this year meeting once a month on Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday evenings and Tuesday at noon. Send an email to Bonnie Lepoff at blepoff@cox.net or contact Rev. Anya if you are interested in joining a group or just learning more.

Several people have expressed interest in meeting on Saturday. If you would like to join a Saturday group, please contact Bonnie or Rev. Anya.

Elder Care Support Group

The Elder Care Support Group meets for breakfast at 8:30am the second Sunday of each month at the Virginia Kitchen in Herndon to discuss issues related to caring for our parents. The coffee is always ready for us. If you would like to join this support group, contact Mike Berger at m.d.berger@ieee.org or just show up.

Men's Spirituality Group

The Men's Spirituality Group has redefined itself and is meeting on second Fridays. See their article in the next column.

Stream Monitoring

The UUS Stream Monitoring Group monitors Beaverdam Run in Ashburn. Members get together periodically to conduct a habitat survey and a biological survey according to a protocol. Results are submitted to the Loudoun County Wildlife Conservancy and used for the annual "The State of Loudoun Streams" report. The Stream Monitoring Group encourages environmental stewardship, and is an opportunity to learn, interact, and commune with our local environment in a family-friendly, fun outdoor activity. Contact Scott Findley at sfind39@aol.com for more information.

Women's Earth-Based Spirituality Group (WEBS)

In this circle of UUS women, we explore the UUA sixth source of wisdom - "Spiritual teachings of earth-centered traditions which celebrate the sacred circle of life and instruct us to live in harmony with the rhythms of nature." The UUS WEBS Group usually meets the fourth Friday of every month. Watch for the announcements. For more information, contact Kim Fitzgerald at Kimberly.fitzgerald@ngc.com.

UUS Men's Group Has Resumed!

Tony Thede and Al Swett have combined forces to co-lead the UUS Men's Group. The meetings will be structured somewhat differently than in the past. Our meetings will encourage pertinent conversation and will invite socializing activities.

The meetings will take place on the second Friday of every month. The next meeting will be February 8 at 7:30 at the church. For more information, contact Tony (tdthede@yahoo.com) or Al (al.swett@tax.virginia.gov).

UUS Board Meeting Highlights

January 3, 2007

Ministry (Bryan George)

Four action items were discussed at the December meeting:

The Ordination/Installation for Rev. Anya has been set for April 13. Venue is still uncertain, but likely UUCF (Fairfax); the only uncertainty is the remodeling schedule at UUCF.

Stephanie submitted an article to the newsletter on the Committee on Ministry.

Pastoral Care was discussed, and the role of the Committee on Ministry. Options were reviewed as to whether a Caring/Concerns Committee should be formed. The desire was also expressed to build up the UUS library with donations/books from the UUA bookstore, Beacon and Skinner press, etc.

There was unanimous agreement as to the utility of a map of congregants. This could be both in electronic form and in hardcopy form.

Religious Education (Linda Weaver)

RE Space:

Condition of RE space after use by Apostolic Church continues to be an issue. Will begin looking for one or two locking cabinets to store supplies for UUS use only and for small items that are choking hazards.

UUS RE Safe Congregation Policy discussion:

The discussion began because of a question by the RE committee about supervision requirements and the difficulty finding volunteers.

Actions to be taken:

Baby monitor installed in nursery.

Look into getting doors with larger windows and installing windows between classrooms.

Recognition of RE volunteers, possibly on Jan. 6, 2008, and after story each Sunday.

Recruit pool of volunteers for nursery and RE classes.

Possibly offer nursery volunteer orientation in January or February.

Policy will be publicized in a variety of forums to inform congregation.

Specific issues to be resolved are if the policy needs to more clearly state conditions for fewer than two adults in a classroom, if the policy needs to state that parents are responsible for nursery age children before and after the worship service and older children before and after RE classes, and if any action needs to be taken relative to the use of UUS space by outside groups with children.

Continue or expand education of RE volunteers during RE orientation.

Possible Safe Congregation forum for entire congregation around September next year.

Get OWL (Our Whole Lives) training for potential OWL leaders.

January 20 RE lesson will include very basic, pre-school appropriate information about body ownership and the "No, Go, Tell" response.

RE (Gus Douguih)

In terms of **Tracking RE Goals**, the RE Committee, as constituted, is suited to handle the issues and challenges facing RE, and none are daunting. In terms of nursery and ministry to parents, the current emphasis is on a safe

congregation policy and recruitment to give parents the freedom to attend regular church service more. The committee has delegated tasks (including review of legal issues and encouraging men to volunteer for nursery duty more than they do now) in order to enable both issues to be addressed in a timely fashion.

Social Action (Shelley Tamres)

December collections (other than Christmas Eve, which was a special collection for Beacon House) will be sent to LAWS, along with the year's collections from pin sales (thank you, Bonnie Lepoff!). Many thanks to Linda Reeder for organizing gift collections for the Holiday Coalition. January collections will be sent to the Darfur Solar Cooker Project..

Coffee Hour

We all enjoy coffee and conversation after the service ... and we really enjoy all the scrumptious treats! Below is the schedule for your family's turn to bring in something wholesome to share. Try to avoid crumbly things that will drop on the floor. Non-sugary things are also appreciated.

Month	Last Name
February	R - S
March	T - Z
April	A - C
May	D - F
June	G - K
July	L - P
August	R - S

February 2008

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2 10:00 a.m.-12:00 Noon Lay Minister Foundations 5:00 p.m. AAFCJ
3 10:30 a.m.: Worship Service: "What Will You Do With Your One Wild and Precious Life?" 12:00 Noon: Inquirer's Class 10:30 a.m.: RE 12:00 Noon: Conver- sations on Belief 3:30 p.m.: AAFCJ	4 7:30 Choir Rehearsal	5	6 6:30 p.m. Understanding the World's Religions	7 7 p. m. Board of Trustees Meeting 7 p.m. Hair Rehearsal	8 7:30 p.m. UUS Men's Group	9 5:00 p.m. AAFCJ
10 8:30 a.m.: Elder Care Support Breakfast 10:30 a.m.: Worship Service: "What Are We Doing Here Anyway?-- Religion II" <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Religious Exploration • Youth Group 	11 7:00 p.m. Covenant Group 7:30 Choir Rehearsal	12 7:00 p.m. Covenant Group  <i>Lincoln</i>	13 6:30 p.m. Understanding the World's Religions	14 7:00 p.m. Covenant Group 	15 7:00 p.m. Hair! Rehearsal	16 6:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. AAFCJ
17 10:30 a.m.: Worship Service: No RE Classes	18 7:30 Choir Rehearsal	19 7 p.m. Cleaning	20 6:30 p.m. Understanding the World's Religions	21 7:00 p.m. Hair! Dress Rehearsal	22 7:00 p.m. WEBS Group  <i>Washington</i>	23 5:00 p.m. AAFCJ
24 10:30 Worship Service: "Hair!" <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Religious Exploration • Youth Group 	25 7:30 Choir Rehearsal	26 12:00 Noon Covenant Group 7:00 p.m. Sterling Gable HOA	27	28 7:00 p.m. Membership Committee Meeting	29	
Please visit http://uusterling.org for current and additional information.						

Unitarian Universalists of Sterling
PO Box 1632
Sterling, VA 20167
(703) 406-3068
<http://www.uusterling.org>



Your Church Leadership

Minister: Rev. Anya Sammler-Michael

Director of Religious Exploration: Linda Weaver; **Music Director:** Daniel Boothe

Board of Trustees: *President* - Bryan George; *Vice President* - Dave Miller; *Secretary* - Jeff Chandler;
Co-Treasurers - Alyssa Lum and Paul Roche; *At-large* - Gus Douoguih, Judy Gruner, Scott Findley, Shelley Tamres

UUS Mission Covenant Statement

The Unitarian Universalists of Sterling offer a place where reason and spirituality converge. We welcome members of the community who are seeking such a religious home. Our mission is to make the community a better place to live by promoting a variety of religious expressions, working toward social justice, and fostering diversity. In order to carry out this mission, we covenant to listen to each other, encourage the exchange of creative thought, and respect our differences.

UUS Sunday Services 10:30 a.m.

Unitarian Universalists of Sterling meets at the Sterling Oaks Commerce Center Sterling, a handicapped-accessible 24-7 facility, located on 22135 Davis Drive near Route 28 and Church Road in Sterling, Virginia. Child care and children's religious education are both provided during worship services. Dress is casual. Children are encouraged to wear play clothes.

From Northbound Route 28: Take Route 28 North exit from the Dulles Toll Road. Turn right at Church Road. Turn right on Davis Drive. Go about one block and turn right into the parking lot.

From Southbound Route 28: Take Route 28 south from Route 7. Turn left at Church Road. Turn right on Davis Drive. Go about one block and turn right into the parking lot.

From Westbound Route 7: Turn left at Sterling Boulevard. Turn right at Church Road. Go three miles. Turn left on Davis Drive. Go about one block and turn right into the parking lot.

What's with UUS

Communications Committee Chair: Terry Dick; **Editor:** Linda Reeder

Production: Jeff Chandler, Susan Miller

Board Liaison: Jeff Chandler

To submit material for publication, send by email to uus-newsletter@yahoo.com

Submission Deadlines

2/15/08 for March

3/21/08 for April

4/18/08 for May

5/23/08 for June